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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/566,818

01/27/2006

Miki Nishida

205700203927US0

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12/23/2008

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EXAMINER

HUSON, MONICA ANNE

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1791

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

12/23/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/566,818	Applicant(s) NISHIDA ET AL.	
	Examiner MONICA A. HUSON	Art Unit 1791	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>030106,072106,040108,120908</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki et al. (U.S. Patent 7,108,820). Suzuki et al., hereafter "Suzuki," show that it is known to carry out a method for producing an injection molded article (Column 2, line 48), comprising the steps of forming pellets of a coated substance after impregnating a natural fiber in a lactic acid based resin by drawing (Column 2, lines 60-67; Column 3, lines 1-2; Column 9, lines 56-66; note that drawing takes place during the kneading and extruding steps), and forming an injection molded article from the pellets obtained after the kneading (Column 9, lines 66-67; Column 10, lines 1-2). Suzuki does not show an step of adding an additional portion of lactic acid. However, mere duplication has no patentable significance unless a new or unexpected result is produced (MPEP 2144.04(VI)(B)). Therefore, It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use an additional portion of lactic acid in the kneading process of Suzuki in order to increase the concentration of lactic acid in the final composition of the pellet to satisfy end-use consumer specifications.

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki, in view of Shiraishi et al. (U.S. Patent 6,124,384).

Regarding Claim 1, Suzuki shows that it is known to have an injection molded article (Abstract), comprising a resin composition comprising a lactic acid based resin containing an L-lactic acid:D-lactic acid ratio of 100:0 to 97:3 (Column 4, lines 10-14), and a natural fiber (Column 4, lines 34-40), wherein the resin composition contains the

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lactic acid based resin and the natural fiber in a mass ratio of 99:1 to 70:30 (Column 4, lines 53-57). Suzuki does not show the contents of the natural fiber. Shiraishi shows that it is known to create an injection molding composition that contains lactic acid and a natural fiber that contains 40 mass% to 60 mass% of cellulose and 10 mass% to 30 mass% of lignin (Column 5, lines 58-61; Column 6, lines 40-55; Column 9, lines 22-25; note that bamboo and bagasse are known natural fibers that meet the claimed fiber composition). It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use Shiraishi's natural fiber as the fiber in Suzuki's molding process in order to make the article biodegradable (See Shiraishi, Column 2, lines 44-53).

Regarding Claims 2-3, Suzuki shows the article as claimed as discussed in the rejection of Claim 1 above, but he does not show the particular physical properties that are claimed. However, Suzuki and Shiraishi teach all of the claimed ingredients, and thus, the claimed effects and physical properties would be implicitly achieved by using the claimed composition. If it is applicant's position that this would not be the case, (1) evidence would need to be presented to support applicant's position, and (2) it would be the examiner's position that the application contains inadequate disclosure in that there is no teaching as to how to obtain the claimed properties and effects by using only the claimed composition.

Regarding Claims 4-5, Suzuki shows the article as claimed as discussed in the rejection of Claim 1 above, including an article made of lactic acid based resin and a natural fiber (Column 2, lines 18-20, 65-67; note that this is product by process claim which is not limited to the manipulation of the recited steps, only the structure implied by the steps (MPEP 2113)), meeting applicant's claim.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MONICA A. HUSON whose telephone number is (571)272-1198. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00am-4:00pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christina Johnson can be reached on 571-272-1176. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Monica A Huson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1791

/Monica A Huson/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1791